

## **Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee**

**Monday, 13 June 2016 at 14:00**

**County Hall, County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP**

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### **AGENDA**

- |    |  |         |
|----|--|---------|
| 1  | To note the appointment by the County Council on the 12th May 2016 of Councillor Liz Plant as Chair of this sub-committee.   |         |
| 2  | Minutes of the last meeting held on 7th March 2016   | 3 - 6   |
| 3  | Apologies for Absence  |         |
| 4  | Declarations of Interests by Members and Officers:- (see note below)<br>(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests<br>(b) Private Interests (pecuniary and non-pecuniary) |         |
| 5  | Performance Reporting (Quarter 4 2015-16) Services for Looked After Children & Care Leavers  | 7 - 12  |
| 6  | Summer Term Report for the Virtual School for Looked After Children  | 13 - 20 |
| 7  | End of Year Report for the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service   | 21 - 32 |
| 8  | Block Purchase of Children's Residential Placements Contracts  | 33 - 36 |
| 9  | Fostering Service - Annual Report April 2015 to March 2016   | 37 - 42 |
| 10 | Leaving Care Service Update  | 43 - 46 |
| 11 | Looked After Children & Care Leavers Strategy Update   | 47 - 58 |

### **Notes**

- (1) Councillors are advised to contact their Research Officer for details of any Group Meetings which are planned for this meeting.
- (2) Members of the public wishing to inspect "Background Papers" referred to in the reports on the agenda or Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act should contact:-

Customer Services Centre 0300 500 80 80

- (3) Persons making a declaration of interest should have regard to the Code of Conduct and the Council's Procedure Rules. Those declaring must indicate the nature of their interest and the reasons for the declaration.

Councillors or Officers requiring clarification on whether to make a declaration of interest are invited to contact Julie Brailsford (Tel. 0115 977 4694) or a colleague in Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

- (4) Councillors are reminded that Committee and Sub-Committee papers, with the exception of those which contain Exempt or Confidential Information, may be recycled.
- (5) This agenda and its associated reports are available to view online via an online calendar - <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/dms/Meetings.aspx>

Meeting	CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE
Date	Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2016 (commencing at 2.00 pm)

**Membership**

Persons absent are marked with an 'A'

**COUNCILLORS**

Liz Plant (Chairman)

Maureen Dobson  
Boyd Elliott  
Kate Foale  
Colleen Harwood

Philip Owen  
Sue Saddington  
Andy Sissons  
Jacky Williams

**Foster Carer**

Sarah Maiden

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Sara Allmond	-	Advanced Democratic Service Officer, Resources
Tracey Coull	-	Adoption Service Manager, Children's Social Care
Sue Denholm	-	Virtual School Co-ordinator, Children's Social Care
Steve Edwards	-	Service Director, Children's Social Care
Linda Foster	-	Acting Group Manager, Education Standards & Inclusion
Philippa Milbourne	-	Business Support Assistant, Children, Families & Cultural Services.
Shelagh Mitchell	-	Group Manager, Children's Social Care

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **PERFORMANCE REPORTING (QUARTER 3 2015/16) – SERVICES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

The report provided a summary of the performance of services for looked after children and care leavers between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

### **RESOLVED 2016/06**

That the performance of services for looked after children and care leavers during the period 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 be noted.

## **SPRING TERM REPORT FOR THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

The report provided an update on the virtual school for the spring term 2016.

The following points were raised:

- Nursery and Reception was now included.
- The Data Officer would work with data officers in further education colleges and a tracking system would be developed to support the virtual school to monitor Looked After Children in further education settings. This would be used to identify those at risk of not achieving their potential.
- The virtual schools for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City were working with Nottingham Trent and Nottingham Universities to set up a higher education day for Looked After young people in years 9 and 10, with the day anticipated to be held in July.
- In the table at the top of page three “other” referred to other providers for example private providers
- Where a Looked After Child was in a school which was rated as below good, the virtual school would work closely with the schools advisors and the decision on whether or not to move the child would be taken on a case by case basis taking into account all information included the level of SEN support available at the current school.
- The new format of the PEP reflected the new performance indicators and includes which subjects being studied.

### **RESOLVED 2016/07**

That the update on the virtual school for the spring term 2016 be noted.

## **PROVISION, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS OF THE CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL AND PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE LOOKED AFTER 2015/16**

The report provided an overview of the work of the Young People Looked After (YPLA) Youth Work team, situation within the Youth Service.

The following points were raised and discussed:

- The amount of work and support put in by the team was excellent.
- More information about the work of the Children in Care Council (CiCC) should be made available to highlight the good work carried out.
- The film referred to in bullet point 8 of paragraph 7 could be shown to the Committee and the young people could be invited to attend and give a presentation to the committee.
- Committee members were invited to attend the Achievement Awards event.

### **RESOLVED 2016/08**

That the overview of the work of the Young People Looked After team be noted.

## **ADOPTION SERVICE UPDATE: SEPTEMBER 2015 TO FEBRUARY 2016**

The report provided the committee with a six monthly update on activity in the adoption service from September 2015 to February 2016.

The following points were raised and discussed:

- Not recruiting adopters only looking for children aged 0-2 years was due to a lack of children requiring a placement within this age bracket and enough potential adopters waiting.
- There had been 55 Special Guardianship orders granted in the past year.

### **RESOLVED 2016/09**

That the six-monthly update on activity in the adoption service from September 2015 to February 2016 be noted.

## **ADVOCACY SERVICE FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

The report provided the committee within information about the Advocacy Service for Looked After Children.

The following points were raised and discussed:

- All National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) referrals were made through a helpline. There were 38 requests in the past year.

- There was confidence in the robustness of the commissioning of the service. Following TUPE transfers for those that wished to the service was now stable.

## **RESOLVED 2016/10**

That the information about the Advocacy Service for Looked After Children be noted.

## **CONTACT SERVICE UPDATE**

The report provided an update on the Contact Service with regard to Looked After Children and the progress that had been achieved following the review of the Service.

The following points were raised and discussed:

- The four rooms at Hawtonville – Newark were in the Children's Centre and were specifically for contact sessions.
- Contact sessions for younger children took place in the morning. For older children they were after school up to approximately 6pm. Sessions could be arranged at weekend by special arrangements.

## **RESOLVED 2016/11**

That the update on the changing role of the Contact Service with regard to Looked After Children and the progress achieved throughout a review of the Service be noted.

## **WORK PROGRAMME**

The updated work programme was discussed and considered by Members.

## **RESOLVED 2016/12**

That the Committee's work programme be noted with a report on Clayfields House to be brought to a future meeting.

## **FOSTER CARERS ITEMS**

Sarah Maiden, Foster Carer queried the procedure for children placed under S20 Order where the parent did not provide approval for an activity the child and foster parent wanted them to attend. Steve Edwards advised that a S20 Order meant that the parental responsibility still remained with the birth parent and therefore their consent was required.

The meeting closed at 2.36pm

## **CHAIRMAN**

7 March 2016

13 June 2016

Agenda Item: 5

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE**

### **PERFORMANCE REPORTING (QUARTER 4 2015/16) – SERVICES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a summary of the performance of services for looked after children and care leavers between 1 January and 31 March 2016.

#### **Information and Advice**

2. The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee agreed to receive quarterly performance reports on key indicators for looked after children (LAC) and care leavers on 14 September 2015. This report provides an update of the regular set of performance information, whereby the most up-to-date information is reported for each measure, unless otherwise indicated.
3. Performance information is set out in **Appendix 1**. Key indicators are aligned against the outcome statements in the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18. This strategy identifies six outcomes to be achieved, and these are listed below:
  - 1) Looked after children and care leavers are happy and healthy
  - 2) Looked after children and care leavers are safe
  - 3) Looked after children and care leavers achieve their potential
  - 4) Looked after children and care leavers are prepared for adulthood
  - 5) Looked after children and care leavers are listened to
  - 6) Looked after children and care leavers build positive relationships.

#### **Key Operational Data**

4. At the end of Quarter 4 2015/16, a total of 839 children were looked after by Nottinghamshire which represents a drop since the end of Quarter 3. It is the third consecutive quarter where the number of LAC has fallen. The rate per 10,000 of 51.6 remains lower than the rates for Nottinghamshire's statistical neighbours and the England average as at the end of 2014/15, which were 57.8 and 60 respectively.

	2014-15				2015-16			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Numbers of children in care (as at Quarter end)	866	851	856	851	855	875	867	839
LAC Rate per 10,000	53.2	52.3	52.6	51.9	52.6	53.8	53.3	51.6
Number of children admitted into care	119	82	94	100	103	100	87	76
Number of children discharged from care	86	90	95	109	92	82	90	94

	2014-15				2015-16			
Age Range	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Under 1	37	33	40	41	40	43	37	27
1-4 years	152	150	125	118	123	128	131	112
5-9 years	182	166	176	170	168	168	171	163
10-15 years	289	293	302	312	317	335	341	345
16+ years	206	209	213	210	207	201	187	192
<b>Total</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>839</b>

	2014-15				2015-16			
Gender	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Male	459	451	447	448	447	456	465	452
Female	407	400	409	403	408	419	402	387
<b>Total</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>839</b>

	2014-15				2015-16			
District	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Ashfield	218	211	213	212	214	214	211	202
Mansfield	184	175	166	175	168	182	186	184
Bassetlaw	164	160	156	156	158	160	154	149
Newark	123	125	124	129	127	130	133	123
Broxtowe	57	55	54	55	57	56	54	51
Gedling	47	52	56	56	55	67	62	63
Rushcliffe	23	23	28	22	23	17	18	21
Out of County/Unknown	50	50	58	46	53	49	49	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>839</b>

5. The volume of looked after children fluctuates a little but is now at the lowest level since the end of 2013/14. Over the course of this year, the age profile of looked after children has altered slightly, with a small increase in the proportion of children aged 10-15 years. The proportion of very young children continues to fall with 16% aged under 5 years now compared with 19% in Quarter 1. The gender profile of looked after children has remained static from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4 with 54% male and 46% female. Historically, the Council has tended to see a slightly higher proportion of females. Gedling and Rushcliffe



are the only districts to see a small increase in the number of looked after children this quarter.

### **Other Options Considered**

6. No other options have been considered as the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee is required to have oversight of the performance of services for looked after children and care leavers.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

7. The recommendations are made so that the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee can effectively fulfil the role required of it.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

8. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications**

9. Reporting on the performance of services for looked after children and care leavers will better enable the Council to ensure that children are effectively safeguarded.

### **Implications for Service Users**

10. Reporting on the performance of services for looked after children and care leavers will better enable the Council to ensure that children and young people are in receipt of high quality services.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the Committee notes the performance of services for looked after children and care leavers during the period 1 January to 31 March 2016.

**Steve Edwards**  
**Service Director, Children's Social Care**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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Group Manager, Access to Resources  
T: 0115 977 74169  
E: shelagh.mitchell@nottsccl.gov.uk

### **Constitutional Comments**

11. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

**Financial Comments (SS 09/05/16)**

12. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 19.

Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18

Developing arrangements for reporting performance to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee – report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee on 14 September 2015

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

C0823

## Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee: Performance Update - June 2016

The key indicators identified below are aligned against the outcome statements in the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy. All indicators are updated with the most up-to-date information as at the time of writing the report. These six outcomes are: 1). Looked after children and care leavers are happy and healthy, 2). Looked after children and care leavers are safe, 3). Looked after children and care leavers achieve their potential, 4). Looked after children and care leavers are prepared for adulthood, 5). Looked after children and care leavers are listened to, 6). Looked after children and care leavers build positive relationships.

Update	LAC & Care Leavers Strategy Ref	Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						
			Current Value	Current Reporting Period	Best to be	Previous Value	Previous Annual Performance	National Average	Statistical Neighbours
Looked after children and care leavers are happy and healthy	1.1	Average Strengths and Difficulties Question (SDQ) Score per LAC	15.4	2014/15	High	14.9	15.5 (2012/13)	13.9 (2014/15)	14.0 (2014/15)
	N/A	Percentage of LAC with up to date immunisations	80.7%	2014/15	High	60.9%	67.8% (2012/13)	87.8% (2014/15)	81.1% (2014/15)
	N/A	Percentage of LAC who have had their teeth checked by a dentist	77.2%	2014/15	High	64.3%	53.0% (2012/13)	85.8% (2014/15)	78.6% (2014/15)
	1.5	Percentage of LAC who have had their annual health assessment	80.7%	2014/15	High	89.6%	71.3% (2012/13)	89.7% (2014/15)	86.1% (2014/15)
	N/A	Percentage of LAC whose development assessments are up to date	70.6%	2014/15	High	75.9%	75.9% (2013/14)	89.4% (2014/15)	77.2% (2014/15)
	N/A	Percentage of LAC identified as having a substance misuse problem	3%	2014/15	Low	0%	0.9% (2012/13)	4.0% (2014/15)	4.4% (2014/15)
Looked after children and care leavers are safe	2.1	Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation	79.5%	2015/16 Q4	High	74.6%	92.8% (2014/15)	80.7% (2014/15)	75.3% (2014/15)
	2.3	Percentage of Nottinghamshire LAC missing from placement by individual child	9.2%	2015/16 Q4	Low	8.5%	11.0% (2014/15)	6% (2014/15)	7.2% (2014/15)
	N/A	Return Interviews completed within timescale	55%	2015/16 Q4	High	72%	64% (2014/15)	—	—
	N/A	Percentage of LAC convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand	1.0%	2014/15	Low	3.9%	6.0% (2012/13)	4.9% (2014/15)	5.0% (2014/15)
Looked after children and care leavers achieve their potential	3.1	Percentage of LAC achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (including English & Maths) at KS4	14.8%	2014/15	High	13.1%	NA	13.8% (2014/15)	13.9% (2014/15)
	3.2	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 2 at KS1 in Reading	64%	2014/15	High	76%	76% (2013/14)	71% (2014/15)	64% (2014/15)
	3.2	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 2 at KS1 in Writing	55%	2014/15	High	67%	67% (2013/14)	63% (2014/15)	59% (2014/15)
	3.2	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 2 at KS1 in Maths	68%	2014/15	High	76%	76% (2013/14)	73% (2014/15)	66% (2014/15)
	3.2	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 4 at KS2 in Reading	66%	2014/15	High	72%	72% (2013/14)	71% (2014/15)	73% (2014/15)
	3.2	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 4 at KS2 in Writing	58%	2014/15	High	55%	55% (2013/14)	61% (2014/15)	58% (2014/15)

Update	LAC & Care Leavers Strategy Ref	Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						
			Current Value	Current Reporting Period	Best to be	Previous Value	Previous Annual Performance	National Average	Statistical Neighbours
Looked after children and care leavers achieve their potential	3.2	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 4 at KS2 in Maths	58%	2014/15	High	69%	69% (2013/14)	64% (2014/15)	62% (2014/15)
	3.3	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training aged 19-21	47.3%	2015/16 Q4	High	47.7%	50.9% (2014/15)	47.8% (2014/15)	42.5% (2014/15)
	3.3	Percentage of care leavers in higher education aged 19-21	4.5%	2015/16 Q4	High	4.3%	4.0% (2014/15)	6.0% (2014/15)	5.7% (2014/15)
	N/A	Percentage of LAC permanently excluded	0.0%	2014/15	Low	0.0%	0.0% (2014/15)	0.13% (2014/15)	0.13% (2014/15)
	N/A	Percentage of LAC with at least one fixed term exclusion	14.6%	2014/15	Low	12.6%	12.6% (2013/14)	10.3% (2014/15)	10.3% (2014/15)
	N/A	Percentage of LAC classed as persistent absentees*	3.1%	2014/15	Low	4.1%	4.1% (2013/14)	4.9% (2014/15)	4.8% (2014/15)
Looked after children are prepared	5.3	Percentage of LAC with an up-to-date Personal Education Plan	62.6%	2015/16 Q4	High	52.7%	60.2% (2014/15)	–	–
	4.2	Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation	79.5%	2015/16 Q4	High	74.6%	92.8% (2014/15)	80.7% (2014/15)	75.3% (2014/15)
Looked after children and care leavers are listened to	5.2	Percentage of LAC who got the chance to speak to their Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) prior to their LAC Review	37.0%	2015/16 Q4	High	38.5%	39.7% (2014/15)	–	–
	5.4	Percentage of LAC who felt their IRO involved them in the LAC Review they attended	97.0%	Feb-16	High	100.0%	–	–	–
	5.4	Percentage of LAC who felt listened to in the LAC Review they attended	90.0%	Feb-16	High	92.0%	–	–	–
	5.1	Percentage of LAC and care leavers who have completed a Listen to Me booklet	30.9%	2015/16 Q4	High	30.5%	29.0% (2014/15)	–	–
Looked after children and care leavers build	6.2	Percentage of looked after children with 3 or more placements in any one year	10.4%	2015/16 Q4	Low	9.0%	9.8% (2014/15)	10% (2014/15)	10% (2014/15)
	N/A	Percentage of looked after children placed within 20 miles or more from home	11.9%	2015/16 Q4	Low	13.3%	16% (2014/15)	14% (2014/15)	13.4% (2014/15)

\*Data for 2013/14 is based on pupils attending a Nottinghamshire school only. Pupils attending out of county schools are not included.

† Values against this indicator may be underreported. More reliable performance indicators are being developed for future reporting

13 June 2016

Agenda Item: 6

## **REPORT OF THE ACTING SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION STANDARDS AND INCLUSION**

### **SUMMER TERM REPORT FOR THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

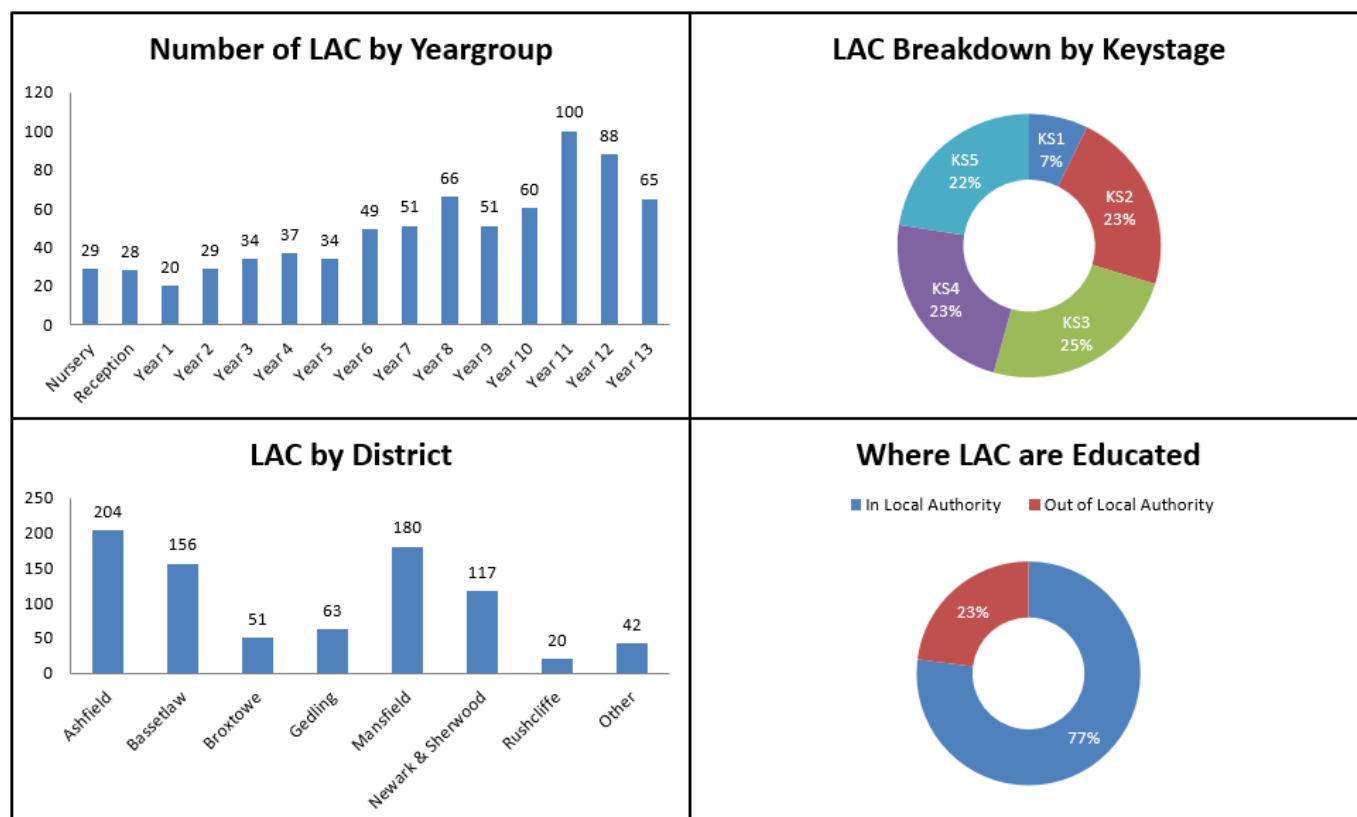
#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee on the virtual school for the Summer term 2016.

#### **Information and Advice**

##### **Virtual School**

2. The number of looked after children (LAC) in each Key Stage, Year Group, Residence and Educational Location is shown below.



#### **Commentary on 2015 outcomes for LAC**

3. The LAC outcomes are based on the DfE's first statistical release for Nottinghamshire looked after children (March 2016). All data is based on the 903 cohort.

### **Key Stage 1 (KS1): Percentage of LAC meeting Age Related Expectations (ARE)**

2014 is based on 20 pupils, 2015 based on 20 pupils

National (England)		<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
	Maths	71	72	73
	Writing	61	61	63
	Reading	69	71	71

Nottinghamshire	Maths	73	76	68
	Writing	70	67	55
	Reading	77	76	64

East Midlands	Maths	70	74	67
	Writing	64	62	58
	Reading	70	70	67

4. The percentage of Nottinghamshire LAC attaining ARE at KS1 (level 2+) in each of three separate subjects declined from 2014 to 2015 as was also the case for the East Midlands (EM) region in 2015. Nottinghamshire's outcomes are broadly similar to EM outcomes but below national.

### **Key Stage 2: Percentage of LAC meeting ARE**

2014 is based on 34 pupils, 2015 is based on 37 pupils

National (England)		<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
	<b>Maths</b>	59	60	64
	<b>Writing</b>	63	68	71
	<b>Reading</b>	55	59	61
	<b>Combined</b>	45	48	52

Nottinghamshire	<b>Maths</b>	52	69	58
	<b>Writing</b>	48	72	66
	<b>Reading</b>	39	55	58
	<b>Combined</b>	35	44	43

East Midlands	<b>Maths</b>	57	58	56
	<b>Writing</b>	58	65	65
	<b>Reading</b>	52	57	52
	<b>Combined</b>	41	43	43

5. The percentage of Nottinghamshire LAC attaining ARE (level 4+ in reading, writing and mathematics combined) at the end of KS2 remained broadly similar from 2014-15. The Nottinghamshire outcome was below the national percentage but in line with the percentage achieved by the EM region. Over a three year period, Nottinghamshire's outcomes demonstrate a trend of improvement whereas the EM trajectory is broadly static. Outcomes in Nottinghamshire are close to the national average in individual

subjects, but too many children did not achieve the expected standard in all three subject areas. This is an area for improvement.

### Key Stage 2: Percentage of LAC making expected progress:

Nat (Eng)	KS2 Expected Progress			
		2014	2015	% +/-
	Maths	75	77	2%
	Writing	82	84	2%
	Reading	81	82	1%

Nottingham shire		2014	2015	% +/-
	Maths	83	70	-13%
	Writing	80	84	4%
	Reading	83	81	-2%

6. From 2014 to 2015, a broadly similar percentage of LAC achieved expected progress in reading. The 2015 outcome compares favourably to a national figure of 82%. In terms of writing, the Nottinghamshire LAC cohort made a full percentage point improvement on the 2014 outcome. This now places Nottinghamshire's LAC outcomes in-line with the national percentage in writing. The percentage of LAC making expected progress in mathematics dropped from 83% in 2014 to 70% in 2015. The Nottinghamshire LAC outcome in terms of mathematics expected progress was 7 percentage points below the national outcome.

### Key Stage 4: Percentage of LAC meeting ARE

2014 is based on 61 pupils, 2015 is based on 66 pupils

	2013	2014	2015
<b>National (England)</b>	15.5	12.2	13.8
<b>Nottinghamshire</b>	12.5	13.1	14.8
<b>East Midlands</b>	13.0	11.0	10.2

7. The percentage of Nottinghamshire's LAC attaining ARE (5+ A\*-C including English and mathematics) at the end of KS4 improved by 1.7 percentage points from 2014-15, compared to a national increase of 1.6 percentage points and a 0.8 percentage point decline in terms the EM LAC cohort. Outcomes in Nottinghamshire have now been above the national average on this indicator for two consecutive years. Over a three year period, Nottinghamshire's outcomes for LAC show a year on year trend of improvement whereas the EM trajectory is in decline and the national outcome has also dropped between 2013 and 2015.

### Key Stage 4: Percentage of LAC making expected progress

		2013	2014	2015
Nat (Eng)	English	32	35	37
	Maths	29	26	29

		2013	2014	2015
Nottingham shire	English	26	29	39
	Maths	21	29	24

8. In terms of the percentage of LAC pupils making expected progress in English (3 levels from KS2-4), Nottinghamshire's 2015 outcome improved by 10 percentage points (in 2014 from 29% to 39% in 2015) whereas the national rate of improvement was 2 percentage points. This now places Nottinghamshire's performance on this measure above the national average for LAC in 2015. Over a three year period this data set indicates there is a strong trend of improvement for Nottinghamshire LAC outcomes in English and the rate of improvement is greater than the national trajectory.
9. In terms of expected progress in mathematics, Nottinghamshire's outcome declined from 29% in 2014 to 24% in 2015. When compared to the national percentage, Nottinghamshire's outcome is 5 percentage points below the national average for LAC in 2015. Whilst outcomes dropped slightly from 2014-15, the three year average for Nottinghamshire LAC shows a 3 percentage point improvement whereas national outcomes over this period have remained static.

### Next steps as a result of the evaluation of 2015 outcomes

10. Nottinghamshire's virtual school team will ensure key actions are in place to provide challenge and support to every school or setting wherever a Nottinghamshire LAC is on roll or attends. In particular, the virtual school coordinator will highlight key subject areas for improvement through designated teacher emails, an input into head teacher briefings and governor newsletters and through targeted LAC achievement officer visits to schools.

### The collation of termly tracking data

11. The virtual school's data officer is now facilitating the collection of termly teacher assessment data. Whilst in the early stages of development, this system is enabling the virtual school team to better support and challenge schools to closely track the termly progress of LAC and to target resources towards those LAC not making sufficient progress.

### Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Pupil Premium (PP)

12. Close working between the virtual school and the early childhood and early help service has ensured that a system is now in place to distribute EYFS pupil premium. The PP funding will be released on a termly basis following the return of the required personal education plan (PEP) documentation.



13. A tracking system will be developed to monitor the impact of PP funding on outcomes for the EYFS LAC cohort.

### **East Midlands Network**

14. Ofsted continues to work with local authorities across the East Midlands region to raise the profile and investigate the barriers to improving attainment of key vulnerable/disadvantaged groups including LAC.
15. During the spring term of 2015, a productive meeting was held between representatives from Ofsted Care Inspectorate and from the East Midlands group of virtual school heads. Discussions included the effective use of PEPs and virtual school support for residential homes. The Ofsted representatives were keen to maintain links with the East Midlands virtual school heads and future meetings will be arranged.

### **Social Care Links**

16. The co-ordinator of the virtual school has attended all social care team meetings this academic year in order to mediate changes to the PEPs. This support was well received with teams reporting that the new documentation is now easier to complete. The bespoke versions of the PEP ensure plans are now more relevant to the age of the LAC and their educational setting e.g. special school, secondary.

### **Further Education**

17. The virtual school's data officer is in the process of setting up meetings with data officers in further education colleges to discuss ways of collating relevant data and information from those providers with looked after children.

### **Higher Education Event**

18. This event, focussing on raising aspirations for LAC, will be held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016 at the Nottingham Trent University Newton Building. Feedback from the event will be reported to the Sub-Committee at a future meeting.

### **Attachment Aware Schools**

19. The virtual school continues to work with a number of partnerships of schools to develop good practice across the County in supporting the needs of children and young people with attachment difficulties. There are now four partnerships engaging with the trauma and attachment training offered through the virtual school. Each partnership will undertake an evaluation of the impact of this training and feedback learning points to the virtual school and all schools across the County. In addition, the virtual school co-ordinator will work with school leaders to monitor exclusions, attendance and progress data in order to measure the impact of this crucial project.

### **Letterbox and Summer Reading Challenge**

20. The Letterbox Club is an award-winning programme, managed by BookTrust, in partnership with the University of Leicester, which aims to provide enjoyable educational support for looked after children aged 5-13 years. Nottinghamshire's virtual school ensures that the Letterbox Club is a sustained offer for all LAC in years 1, 3, 5 and 7. This year, over 150 looked after children will benefit from this valuable project.
21. During 2016-17, the 'BFG' books (written by the much-loved children's author Roald Dahl) will be the focus of the libraries' Summer Reading Challenge. The virtual school co-ordinator has worked closely with the library service to ensure that age-appropriate BFG books are included in all parcels to LAC and that information about the Summer Reading Challenge is also included and therefore promoted.
22. The Letterbox Club continues to be very popular. The evaluation of last year's scheme demonstrates how valued both looked after children and their carers find this scheme.

### **Achievement Event**

23. The event will take place in July 2016 at the Albert Hall in Nottingham. This year the guest speaker will be Simon Weston. There has been a good response with well over 100 looked after children being nominated. There will also be a special award made for outstanding achievement in memory of the late social worker, John Stollery.

### **Good News**

24. Book tokens continue to be sent out to looked after children for a host of reasons including most house points, making outstanding progress and sporting achievements.

### **Other Options Considered**

25. No other options have been considered.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

26. This report is for noting only.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

27. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the update on the virtual school for the Summer term 2016 be noted.

**Marion Clay**  
**Acting Service Director, Education Standards and Improvement**  
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### **Constitutional Comments**

28. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

### **Financial Comments (SS 17/05/16)**

29. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Spring term report of the virtual school for looked after children – report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee on 7 March 2016.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

C0827



13 June 2016

Agenda Item: 7

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE**

### **END OF YEAR REPORT FOR THE INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO) SERVICE**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee about the activities and performance of the Independent Reviewing Officer Service from April 2015 to March 2016, and to inform the Sub-Committee of the areas of focus in the coming year.

#### **Information and Advice**

2. The annual report, which is attached as **Appendix 1**, informs the Sub-Committee about the activities undertaken by the Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) in ensuring good outcomes for the children and young people in Nottinghamshire. It also takes into consideration how well the Service is doing and identifies areas for focus in the coming year 2016-17.
3. The report focusses on the key functions of the Independent Reviewing Officers and highlights the challenge and ongoing robustness of the IRO's role when working with looked after children and young people. Over the past year, the looked after population has remained stable and this has enabled the IROs to increasingly fulfil the wider expectations of their role and increase their contact with children and young people in order to advocate on their behalf. Indeed IROs are continuing to find creative ways to ensure that children and young people are able to contribute to or attend their looked after reviews.

#### **Other Options Considered**

4. The report is for noting only

#### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

5. The report is for noting only.

#### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

6. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such

implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the activities and performance of the Independent Reviewing Officer service from April 2015 to March 2016, and the areas of focus in the coming year, be noted.

**Steve Edwards**  
**Service Director, Children's Social Care**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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## **Constitutional Comments**

7. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

## **Financial Comments (SS 09/05/16)**

8. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

None.

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

C0826

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Annual Report of Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service**  
April 2015 – March 2016

Independent Chair Service vision statement:

***“To ensure that, through the independent review process, protection and care plans for children meet their individual needs and secure better outcomes for children and young people.”***

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Independent Chair Service (ICS) in Nottinghamshire is part of the Safeguarding and Independent Review Service. The ICS is responsible for quality assuring practice in relation to children in public care and children subject to child protection plans, ensuring that appropriate care/safeguarding plans are in place for these children, and promoting effective interagency working. There are two groups of staff within the ICS and this report will focus on the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). A separate report is available in respect of the Child Protection Coordinator part of the service.
- 1.2 The IRO Handbook states that the manager of the IRO service is responsible for the production of an annual report for the scrutiny of the members of the Corporate Parenting Board, and for it to be accessible as a public document. This report will provide information and analysis regarding the activity and performance of the IRO service over the past 12 months, and identify areas for development in the coming year. Progress against actions identified in the annual report 2014-2015 will be addressed in the body of the report.

## **2. Purpose of Service and Legal Context**

- 2.1 The legal framework for the IRO service is set out in the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 and the IRO Handbook 2010. The role of the IRO is to ensure that Nottinghamshire County Council acts as a responsible corporate parent, and that the child's care plan fully reflects their current needs and is consistent with the local authority's legal responsibilities towards the child. The IRO has a key role in relation to the improvement of care planning for Looked After Children and for challenging drift and delay.
- 2.2 In summary, there are two clear and separate aspects to the function of the IRO:
  - Chairing the child's review
  - Monitoring the child's case on an on-going basis

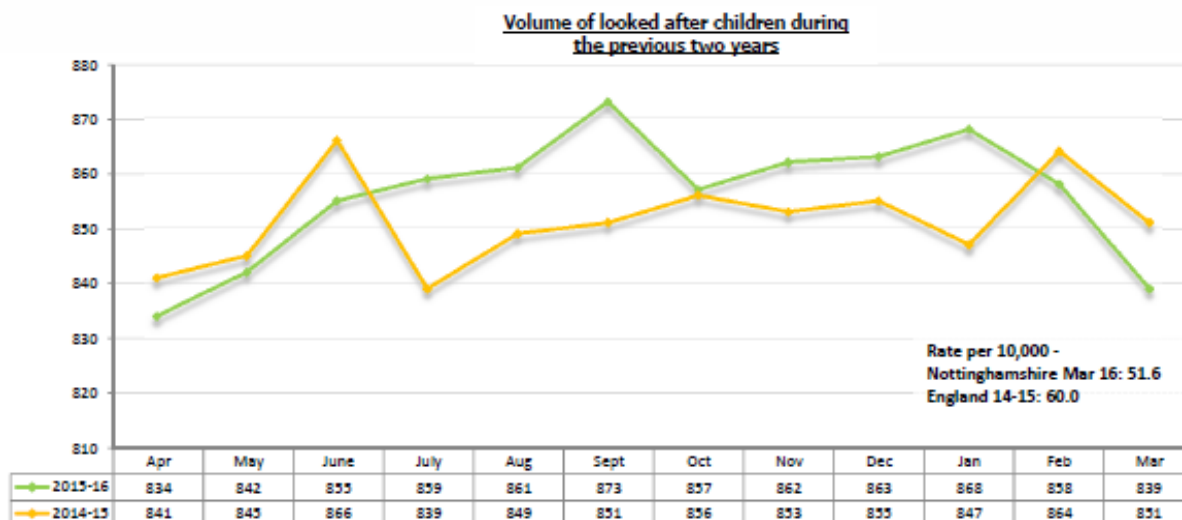
## **3. Staffing/workload**

- 3.1 The establishment for the IRO team is 14 (full time equivalent). It has been necessary to continue to use limited agency staff during the year in order to maintain capacity and provide an effective service. However, recruitment activity has been on-going and internal 12 month secondment opportunities have also been offered. During the year we have successfully recruited two permanent IROs and there have been three secondment positions; this set against 3 experienced IROs leaving the service. As at the end of March 2016 there was one agency worker covering a vacancy in the team. Following very recent recruitment activity there is a preferred candidate for a permanent appointment with a view to a start date being in June 2016. This will result in the team having no vacancies and the cessation of the contract of the remaining agency worker.
- 3.2 The IRO Handbook 2010 states in order to carry out the overall roles and responsibilities as laid out in the Care Planning Regulations a full time IRO should ideally have a caseload consisting of 50-70 children/young people. Caseloads have varied throughout the year depending on stability in staffing and the experience of the IRO. The more experienced IROs caseloads have tended to be slightly higher than the guidance recommends, between 70 and 75, which has allowed new IROs to have lower and gradually increasing caseloads. Given the stability in the number of LAC children in Nottinghamshire, it is envisaged that once the staffing group is stabilised then all caseloads will be within the recommended national guidance.
- 3.3 Within the team lead roles are designated to IROs who develop specialist knowledge. For example working with children with disabilities, those who are unaccompanied asylum seeking children and other vulnerable children within the looked after population. By taking on a specific lead role this helps broaden the practice and knowledge within the team and contributes to the profile of the team. Lead roles also include participation of young people, liaison with CAFCASS/the Virtual School/Local Family Justice Board/Children in Care Council and foster carers meetings.

#### **4. Profile of Looked After Children in Nottinghamshire**

- 4.1 As at the end of March 2016, there were 839 children and young people looked after by the authority. This figure has remained relatively stable throughout this year and the previous year. This total figure includes 27 children with disabilities who are accommodated under an agreed series of short-term breaks. The looked after rate per 10,000 at the end of the year was 51.6 which remains lower than the rates for both our statistical neighbours and the England average as at the end of 2014/15 which were 57.8 and 60 respectively. Whilst there is no target to increase the LAC numbers in Nottinghamshire to bring it in line with our statistical neighbours, it is crucial to ensure that children in need of protection are accommodated in a timely way. The child protection coordinators in the ICS have a role within this and will raise an alert if it is felt that the accommodation of a child is necessary and appropriate actions are either not taking place or are drifting.





- 4.2 A total number of 366 children or young people became Looked After in Nottinghamshire between April 2015 and March 2016. Neglect or abuse has continued to be the main reason (42%), with family dysfunction or the family being in acute stress also featuring highly.
- 4.3 A significant percentage of the children who became looked after in Nottinghamshire over the past year were under the age of 1 (59 children: 16%). This demonstrates early recognition of concerns from historical information, timely assessment and actions to safeguard children where necessary. It would be reasonable to expect that the majority of these children will either be adopted or secure other permanence plans with family members or a return home. There were also a high number of 15 -17 years olds (94 children: 26%) who were looked after over the year, which includes a number of vulnerable homeless 16 and 17 year olds. Indeed 15 to 17 year olds made up 31% of the LAC population at the end of March 2016.
- 4.4 Of the total number of children who became looked after this year the majority where initially accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (75%). This means that these children were accommodated at the request of and or in agreement with parent/s or those with parental responsibility. Updated guidance was recently introduced in Nottinghamshire regarding the use of section 20 accommodation in situations where there are child protection concerns. Section 20 accommodation is intended as a short-term measure pending either a return home or the commencement of care proceedings, and these cases are now being more closely monitored by both the operational service managers and the IROs both in relation to preventing delay and ensuring informed consent by parents. At the end of March 2016, 35% of the total LAC population in Nottinghamshire were section 20 accommodated, and the majority of these were 15-17 years of age.
- 4.5 There has been significant challenge in reducing the length of Court proceedings, which are to be concluded within 26 weeks. Performance is improving and the IRO has a role within this to ensure that appropriate plans are in place to undertake assessment activity in a timely way and involving wider family members at an early stage.
- 4.6 There has been a steady percentage of children returning home to live with

parents, being made subject to special guardianship orders or adoption orders and also young people progressing onto independent living, which has contributed to the LAC population in Nottinghamshire remaining stable throughout the year. IROs have a key role in ensuring that a child's Care Plan is continuing to meet their needs and that changes to the plan are made to reflect any change in circumstances. The following example illustrates this:

- *A 5 year old boy was accommodated in foster care in 2011 and made the subject of a Care Order due to parents' alcohol use and associated poor parenting. In a LAC review in September 2014 it was recognised by the IRO who had been involved since he was first accommodated that there had been significant change in parent's circumstances and an further updated parenting assessment was recommended. This assessment was positive and the child was subsequently rehabilitated to his parents' care and the Care Order was discharged in August 2015.*

## **5. Looked After Reviews**

- 5.1 IROs chaired 2,431 LAC reviews (including 61 short break LAC reviews) between April 2015 and March 2016. This is an increase in the total number of reviews from the previous year (2,263). IROs are required to hold looked after reviews earlier than the statutory intervals in circumstances such as if a child has moved placements on an unplanned basis or where a significant change to the child's care plan is required. This would explain why the number of reviews held has increased despite the LAC population remaining stable.
- 5.2 The percentage of children who had all of their looked after reviews held as set out in statutory timescale between April 2015 and March 2016 was 92.2%. This is an improvement from the end of March 2015, which was 90.5% although it is noted that this remains below the local target. Primary reasons for reviews being held out of timescale are late requests being made for initial LAC reviews, and dates having to be rearranged due to changes in staffing and availability of either the social worker or IRO. When reviews have been held out of timescale the large majority have been rearranged within one week or in exceptional circumstance a fortnight.

## **6. Children and young people's participation in their reviews**

- 6.1 The IRO service has continued to work hard to ensure that children and young people participate in their review. Indeed in 2015/6 children aged 4 and over are recorded to have conveyed their views in over 94% of reviews, which signifies continued improvement from the previous year.
- 6.2 The IRO monitoring data indicates that the majority of children and young people are consulted about the venue of the meeting and who they would like to attend the review. Of the total number of reviews held this year in respect of children aged 4 years and over, 43.7% had the child/young person attending the review meeting or part of their meeting. There are examples where young people have been supported by their IRO to either chair or co-chair their own review. This can be a daunting task for a young person but also very rewarding. IROs are creative with the young people and discuss the best ways in which they can contribute to their review. This can be illustrated in the following example:

- *A young person had initially been too anxious to attend their LAC reviews. The IRO talked to them about how they could best contribute and consequently the young person decided that they wanted to make a power point presentation; they came to part of their review and talked through the presentation called “the real me”. This included slides about me, my foster family, and parents; and included written updates, pictures, and photographs. Within this the young person was able to portray how they were feeling and what they were happy or worried about. This style of contribution by the young person has been really positive and they have continued to produce presentations for their subsequent review meetings. Indeed the young person’s views are very much heard in their review and all attendees look forward to seeing the presentation.*
- 6.3 Some children or young people make informed decisions not to attend their review but will participate in other ways such as completing the ‘listen to me’ document, providing their views in other written or pictorial forms, or alternatively meeting with their IRO prior to the review. IROs are increasingly visiting children and young people prior to reviews, and this can include observing very young children in placement with their carers’.
- 6.4 The group of young people least likely to participate in their review are teenagers. IROs continue to consider creative ways in exploring how to communicate with those who do not attend or present their views for the review. During the year, particular focus has been given to developing a ‘person centred approach’ to reviews, which is intended to be less adult orientated and more child/young person focussed. The aim of person centred reviews is to ensure the child is at the centre of discussions and actions. This will identify what people like and admire about the child, what is important to them and what help and support they believe they need. Person centred planning can be particularly successful in engaging teenagers and disabled young people in their reviews. The following examples illustrates positive ways in which the person centred approach has been utilised:
- *A young person was allocated a specific IRO who was experienced in utilising the person centred approach as he was not engaging with the LAC review process as he thought it was boring, but it was evident that he would participate in education meetings that had been completed in a person centred style. The IRO worked closely with the social worker to prepare the young person, his grandparents and professionals for the review meeting. The outcome was positive and the young person engaged well with his review; he remained in the review meeting throughout and did not get angry or upset as he had done previously. The young person appeared to benefit from hearing what people ‘liked and admired’ about him. It was also clear that the young person managed better with people writing things down on paper in respect of ‘what’s not working’ rather than hearing this directly from the person. He also benefitted from the visual aspect of the meeting and the clear action plan moving forward. The young person is now 16 years of age and is continuing to engage in his looked after process and review meetings.*
  - *An IRO decided to utilise the person centred approach for a review following some negative views/attitude towards a young person; the IRO thought that it would re-focus the review on being the child’s meeting and also acknowledge the positives about the young person. Feedback following the meeting from those who attended felt that the*

*person centred format had been more positive and productive. The young person had not attended the meeting but did receive feedback from the IRO; they had been especially keen to hear what the foster carer, the mother and other professionals had said about “what they liked and admired” about them. The young person is now keen to attend future reviews.*

## **7. LAC review minutes and child friendly reports**

- 7.1 A record of the review meeting is produced by the IRO and the local target for these minutes to be distributed is 20 working days. The timeliness of the distribution of review minutes has continued to be monitored and the average throughout the year has been 76%, which is comparable to the previous year. ICS managers continue to audit the quality of the review minutes. Further work has also been undertaken on the agendas to ensure consistency, that the voice of the child is clearly recorded and that any safeguarding issues are documented and addressed including concerns relating to child sexual exploitation or missing.
- 7.2 Work has been undertaken in consultation with the Nottinghamshire children in care council on producing child friendly reports from reviews ‘my LAC review report’. This document is written specifically for the child and is in addition to the standard minutes. The report is considerably shorter and simplified; focusing on what the care plan is, what has gone well since the last review, how they are feeling and what they want to achieve going forward and actions required. This approach is being piloted in order that further clarification and guidance can be provided regarding when and how they should be used, with the plan to extend to all relevant reviews.

## **8. Dispute Resolution process**

- 8.1 The IRO handbook sets out that one of the key functions of the IRO is to resolve problems arising out of the care planning process. Where an IRO has significant concerns about practice or other issues affecting a child’s care plan then the IRO can instigate an alert. In the first instance, the IRO will initiate an alert and seek to resolve the concerns with the social work team manager. A record of this alert and outcome is placed on the child’s file. If the matter is not resolved within the required 10 working day timescale then the IRO with their manager will then consider taking action by progressing to stage 1; this involves the operational service manager.
- 8.2 During the year 91 alerts were initiated by IROs to Social Care practitioners, which is a significant reduction from the 137 alerts the previous year. The themes that emerge from alerts largely relate to concerns regarding care planning; drift and delay in respect of recommendations not being completed from the previous review, assessments not being completed in a timely manner where a decision is needed to progress the care plan, and the completion and quality of pathway plans for young people who are preparing to leave care. It is recognised that instability and changes in social worker can impact on planning for reviews, statutory visits not being undertaken in timescale, and drift and delay in care planning, and when this is the case this has been noted in the alert.
- 8.3 In relation to outcomes, there were no alerts this year that were escalated

above stage 1/service manager level. The following illustrates an example of a positive outcome from an alert:

- *An IRO had concerns regarding proposed changes to contact arrangement between 2 siblings and their father. The IRO had been involved with the children for 7 years although there had been various changes in social worker. Father had requested that his contact with the children progress to unsupervised and an assessment based on the current quality of the contact was largely positive. However the IRO felt that the updated assessment had failed to take into account the historical concerns and risks, and an alert was initiated to request that no changes were made to the contact arrangements until a comprehensive updated risk assessment was undertaken. This assessment was subsequently undertaken and it was decided that unsupervised contact would not be in the children's best interest; the children have continued to enjoy regular contact with their father whilst ensuring that they are safeguarded from any harm.*

8.4 If considered necessary, IROs will also note concerns with external partners by raising this with the individual concerned and then following this up in writing. Ensuring that any relevant issues for partner organisations are effectively raised and recorded was an area of development for 2015-16. Discussions have been undertaken with the staff group regarding any barriers to this, and the ICS Service Managers have ensured that if any significant concerns are raised by IROs regarding partner agencies that these have been followed up and recorded. The number of instances of this happening has remained very low.

8.5 Whilst it is important that IROs raise concerns about poor practice it is equally important to highlight where practice has been outstanding and has had a significant impact on the outcomes for a child/young person. Indeed this is particularly important in generating a culture of continuous improvement. IROs do alert Social Care managers and senior managers when practice has been outstanding. Compliments are also made by IROs regarding foster carers and residential homes when the support they have provided a child or young person is felt to be exceptional.

## **9. Case tracking/monitoring**

9.1 In line with the requirements of the IRO handbook, IROs monitor children and young people's cases on an on-going basis. They specifically scrutinise and track the most vulnerable children; these being subject to child sexual exploitation and children regularly missing from care. IROs will record when they have viewed a child's file or liaised with the social worker or team manager, in order to demonstrate their on-going involvement and impact on the case.

## **10. Learning and development**

10.1 The ICS service managers have continued to attend quarterly IRO regional managers meetings, this has been positive in terms of sharing new developments and good practice, and planning regional IRO training workshops. The meetings have also been a good mechanism to either feed

information into or provide feedback from the national IRO managers group and work plan.

- 10.2 Regional training workshops for IROs have continued to be held quarterly throughout 2015-16, and topics have included care planning, person centred planning and evidence of effectiveness. There is good attendance by the IROs in Nottinghamshire who value this role specific training. There have also been 2 joint training events over the year between the IRO service in Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City and CAFcass. The topics included addressing CSE and 'together or apart' sibling assessments.

## **11. Feedback from children, young people, parents/carers and professionals**

- 11.1 Feedback was sought from those young people aged 9 years and over, parents/carers and professionals who attended a LAC review in February 2016. Questionnaires were given out following 85 LAC reviews and the feedback is very encouraging. In respect of the 31 young people who completed a questionnaire it showed that those who attended their review felt listened to and had spoken to the IRO prior to the review, they felt involved in the meeting and all fully understood and agreed with the decisions that were made. This high level of satisfaction is consistent with a previous similar exercise that was undertaken in November 2014. It is worth noting that the rate of young people reporting that they had the opportunity to speak to the IRO prior to the review has continued to improve on previous feedback. Collating the views of children and young people on a regular basis will continue, including how technology can be utilised.
- 11.2 Feedback questionnaires were completed by 398 professionals and parents/carers who attended reviews in February 2016, and these were equally positive towards the IROs and the review meeting and again comparable to previous feedback. Professionals and nearly all parents/carers felt welcomed by the IRO, they were given time to share information, felt respected by the IRO, and left the meetings with a clear understanding of the care plan for the child/young person.  
Comments made included:
- *I was asked my views throughout the meeting – parent.*
  - *Very good meeting, young person centred – residential worker.*
  - *Wonderful, brilliant, thank you – parent.*
- 11.3 The managers and the IRO service continue to seek and learn from service user feedback. Exploring how the service can obtain the views of children aged 5-9 years was an area of development for the past year. This was discussed with the Nottinghamshire Children in Care Council - No Labels Group, and the feedback received was that the 'listen to me' booklets that children are already encouraged to complete prior to their reviews gives the opportunity for these children to put forward their views regarding the wider service. They were not recommending that any further tools were developed.
- 11.4 Seeking views/feedback from children and young people who were having a LAC review at the time they were also subject to a Social Care case file audit



was previously identified as an area for development in order that these views could be included in the audit findings. This was undertaken but the methodology did not generate a sufficient return rate to provide any qualitative information.

- 11.5 There have been no formal complaints made to the independent chair service in relation to independent reviewing officers during 2015/16. Given the large number of LAC reviews held, this demonstrates the skilled way the IROs chair and manage complex meetings.

## **12. Key findings**

- The LAC population has remained stable throughout the year which has enabled IROs to continue to fulfil the wider expectations of their role; including contacting children/young people in advance of reviews and monitoring a child's case on an on-going basis.
- Recruitment activity has been positive and secondment opportunities have been offered to generate further interest in the role.
- IROs are continuing to find creative ways to ensure that children and young people are able to contribute to or attend their reviews.
- Child friendly reports from reviews are being piloted.
- There has been a significant reduction in the number of alerts being initiated by IROs to Social Care practitioners. There continue to be good examples of child centred challenges made by IROs to promote good outcomes for children and young people.
- There continues to be positive feedback from children/young people, parents/carers and other professionals regarding the IRO service.
- IROs continue to value the role specific regional training opportunities that promote development and effectiveness.

## **13. Areas for focus during 2016-17.**

- Development of the use of technology in ascertaining children and young people's wishes and feelings regarding their care plan, and also wider feedback regarding the IRO service.
- Implementation of child friendly reports from reviews.
- Further development of the 'person centred approach' in reviews.
- Explore alternative methods of gaining feedback on the IRO service.

29.04.16  
Suzie Morris and Izzy Martin  
Service Managers  
Independent Chair Service

## Safeguarding and Independent Review



13 June 2016

Agenda Item: 8

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE**

### **BLOCK PURCHASE OF CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENTS CONTRACTS**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To up-date the Sub-Committee regarding the progress of the block purchase of children's residential placements contracts.

#### **Information and Advice**

2. Nottinghamshire County Council has a block contract with Castle Care and G4S, trading as Homes 2 Inspire, to provide 24 beds with 20 beds expected to be in the County boundary, and at least 50% being in the north of the County.
3. The Council currently has five young people placed with Castle Care, who have existing children's homes in Nottinghamshire.
4. Castle Care have sufficient capacity to fulfil their contractual obligations to provide the required number of beds within Nottinghamshire.
5. Homes 2 Inspire at present only have one home in the County, Evans House (three bed home), and none in north Nottinghamshire. However, they are providing the Council with local beds at homes based in Nottingham City, and outside of Nottinghamshire which are paid for on the block rate. The Council has nine young people placed with Homes to Inspire.
6. Homes 2 Inspire will be opening two homes in Nottinghamshire over the coming months, with Meadow View House, in Worksop due to open at the end of June 2016 and Wendover House in Sherwood in early September 2016. Homes 2 Inspire are actively seeking a further home in Nottinghamshire and have made an offer on a property in Mansfield and, if successful, will have a sufficient number of beds in Nottinghamshire to fulfil their contractual obligations.
7. Overall, the block contract is delivering budget savings, and demonstrates the strategic intention to place Nottinghamshire Looked After Children within County boundaries. The contract will lead to savings of approximately £800,000 by 2018 which is later than envisaged (2017) due to the capacity issues.

## **Other Options Considered**

8. The report is for noting only.

## **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

9. The report is for noting only.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

10. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

11. There are significant financial savings to the Council from this contract award as highlighted in **paragraph 7**.

## **Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications**

12. Young people will be better safeguarded via local placements with reductions associated in both Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing episodes.

## **Implications for Service Users**

13. The County Council will deliver better outcomes for Looked After Children when they are placed in County.
14. There will be service user involvement via the Children in Care Council to monitor and evaluate this contract.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That progress on the block purchase of children's residential placement contracts be noted.

**Steve Edwards**  
**Service Director, Children's Social Care**

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### **Constitutional Comments**

15. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

### **Financial Comments (SS 26/05/16)**

16. The financial implications of the report are contained within paragraph 11 above.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Block purchase of children's residential placements contracts – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 21 March 2016 (previously published)

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

C0835



**13 June 2016****Agenda Item: 9****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE****FOSTERING SERVICE: ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2015 TO MARCH 2016****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report provides information on the activity and performance of the fostering service from April 2015 to March 2016.

**Information and Advice**

2. Nottinghamshire saw a rapid increase in the number of children in care during the period of 2008 and 2013. The number of children in the Council's care rose from 455 children to 901 (April 2013). This created a significant demand, in a relatively short period of time, for placements for these children. The Council needs to be able to place more children in its internal fostering service and has set a target of increasing its internal fostering capacity by recruiting 160 new foster carers over a three year period (2014-17).
3. The number of children in the Council's care has stabilised within the range of 841 (April 2014) to 851 (March 2015) to 839 (March 2016). Of the 839 children in the Council's care, 620 are placed in foster care (73.9% compared with 74.7% at the end of March 2015). Of these 620 children, 207 (33.4%) are placed with an independent foster provider (compared with 214 at the end of March 2015) and 413 (66.6%) are placed with a foster carer approved by Nottinghamshire (compared with 422 (66%) at the end of March 2015).
4. Of the 839 children in the Council's care, 413 are placed with a foster carer approved by Nottinghamshire. This equates to 49.23% of the total looked after population. The internal fostering service is the Council's highest provider of placements at the lowest cost. At the end of March 2016, the weekly cost of fostering in the internal service was £496 compared with the weekly cost of an independent fostering placement which is £816.
5. There are continued, positive indicators of reduced reliance upon higher cost independent fostering provision. The number of children placed with an independent fostering provider has reduced from 282 (April 2013) to 238 (April 2014) to 214 (March 2015) to 207 (March 2016). However, the number of children placed in external residential provision has fluctuated from 89 (April 2013) to 81 (April 2014) to 67 (March 2015) to 79 (March 2016). The number of children placed with a foster carer approved by Nottinghamshire increased in 2014/15 from 380 (60%) of all children in foster care to 422 (66%) in March 2015 and has remained stable at 66.6% (March 2016).

6. There have been a number of initiatives which have contributed to this outcome. There has been a proactive and sustained advertising and marketing approach resulting but there has been slight reduction in information requests to the fostering recruitment team. Of the information requests received, 232 requested an initial assessment of which 106 resulted in completion (a drop-out rate of 46%) and progression to the full fostering assessment.
7. 52 foster households were approved in 2015/16 compared with 66 in 2014/15 and 65 in 2013/14. The Council terminated the approval of 2 foster households in 2015/6 and 7 foster households submitted their resignation- a total loss of 9 foster households (compared with a loss of 26 households in 2014/15). The resultant net gain to the Council in 2015/16 was 43 households compared with 40 in 2014/15.
8. The recruitment and retention of foster carers is the core activity within the fostering service. The performance in 2015/16 is indicative of very positive retention activity but less positive recruitment activity. The latter is attributable to a number of different factors. These are budgetary restrictions and the closure of fee paid fostering schemes (fostering futures and contract care) - fee paid fostering roles have historically attracted a high number of information requests; the targeted recruitment of foster carers for older children and sibling groups restricting the pool of potential prospective foster carers for assessment.
9. In April 2014, the fostering service introduced a new fee paid fostering scheme to attract foster carers for children aged 11 years plus. It was anticipated that this would attract appropriately skilled and experienced people to foster an older child and funding was made available for 9 new foster households. This new scheme attracted 3 new foster carer approvals in 2014/15 and the scheme had grown to 7 foster households as at the end of March 2016. This indicates the challenges involved in attracting foster carers for an older child - even when competitive fees are attached. Growth is steady but slow and not commensurate to the demand.
10. A new initiative, in November 2015, to recruit foster carers for refugee children was successful in approving 6 foster households. These foster carers were recruited specifically in response to the crisis faced by unaccompanied Syrian children. The Government has yet to make a decision in respect of the United Kingdom's response to unaccompanied children from Syria and, consequently, these foster carers have been caring for unaccompanied children from other countries.
11. An important factor in supporting the sufficiency of internal fostering provision is the way in which the Council retains and develops its existing foster carers. The Council terminated the approval of 2 foster households in 2015/16 and 7 foster households submitted their resignation - a total loss of 9 foster households compared with 26 foster households in 2014/15, 36 in 2013/14 and 10 in 2012/13. The primary reason for terminating foster carer approval was for safeguarding reasons and the primary reason cited on notices of resignation was age related change in circumstances.
12. In April 2016, there were 330 approved foster carers (236 mainstream; 25 home from home/contract care; 37 support carers; 32 family and friends). In April 2016, 23 of the 236 mainstream foster homes had vacancies, that is, a vacancy rate of 9% compared

with a vacancy rate of 24% in April 2015. This suggests that internal fostering capacity has been maximised and is at near capacity.

13. The fostering service has strengthened its support strategy to foster carers and children who foster. A Sons and Daughters Council has now been established and a third annual event took place in October 2015. It is anticipated that this celebration event will take place on an annual basis as part of the children who foster strategy. The contribution of the foster carers' birth children to the outcomes for a fostered child has long been appreciated and recognised.
14. The fostering service has a good reputation in respect of the support it provides to its foster carers. This is evidenced by a very low level of complaint from foster carers and by the level of foster carer retention. The support strategy has continued to be enhanced by engaging foster carers in service developments. Foster carers have been involved in recruitment activity, media interviews and a group of foster carers have attended consultation forums regarding activity within the transformation programme. The joint team meeting initiative (between foster carers and supervising social workers) was introduced in January 2014 and has continued to be very successful and well received. The fostering service continues to support its foster carers in their professional development and professional identity through a varied programme of learning, training and developmental opportunities. A long service and achievement event for foster carers was held in March 2016.
15. The fostering service is a service for children. A changed approach to long term family finding for children in the care system has continued to have had mixed results. The profiles of children, who wait for a long term foster family, have been featured on the online learning and information portal for foster carers and in communications with the foster carer community but the response has been very low. The children who wait strategy will continue in 2016/17 - particularly targeting the needs of young people currently living in residential care.
16. A proposal to reshape the fostering service was considered by the Divisional Leadership Team in June 2014. Subsequently, it was decided to cease expansion of therapeutic fostering (fostering futures); expand provision of long term placements for disabled children (contract care, which was subsequently withdrawn as an initiative); establish an independent review service for foster carer reviews and continue with the establishment of a specialist team for foster carers who are connected to the child they look after (family and friends). Subsequently, further areas of transformational activity were identified within the Transformation Programme for 2015/16 - the allowances/fees that are payable to foster carers and the structure of the fostering service. The fostering service has delivered on both of these areas. A new fostering payment process was introduced in April 2016 and a new structure is to be implemented in May 2016. Both of these activities have required a significant amount of activity from staff and foster carers. It is testament to the commitment, dedication and hard work of staff and foster carers that the core business activity has been sustained alongside the additional demands of implementing change. There is a tension in seeking to provide increased internal fostering provision alongside making savings but efficiency measures and changed ways of working continue to be proactively considered.

17. It has been a challenging year for the fostering service. On-going change is indicated and it is crucial that the many strengths of the service are not diluted. The fostering service has approved 117 households in the two previous financial years and is on target to achieve the transformational approval target of 160 foster households. The performance of the fostering service was acknowledged by Ofsted in its inspection of the Council's safeguarding and care services in 2015, as being "impressive".

### **Other Options Considered**

18. This report is for information only.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

19. It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

20. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Consultation has not been undertaken as advice was not required.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the information on the activity and performance of the fostering service from April 2015 to March 2016 be noted.

**Steve Edwards**  
**Service Director, Children's Social Care**

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### **Constitutional Comments**

21. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

### **Financial Comments (SS 02/06/16)**

22. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.



**Background Papers and Published Documents**

None.

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

C0831



**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE****LEAVING CARE SERVICE UPDATE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide the Committee with an update on the Leaving Care Service. The service is part of the Throughcare Service and provides advice, support and guidance to young people who have left the care of the Local Authority and are over the age of 18 years.

**Information and Advice**

2. Young people receive services from the Leaving Care Team from the age of 18 to 21 years. Should young people remain in higher education or wish to return to education, they are entitled to services up until 25 years. Statutory duties regarding this group of young people are contained in the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and service delivery is subject to guidance and regulations from the Department for Education which were last revised in October 2014.
3. There has been no change to the team structure or specification since the previous report to this Committee on 14 September 2015. September 2015 to March 2016 was a difficult period with four posts unfilled due to sickness and vacancies. In order to support the service the team manager's hours were increased to full time on a temporary basis and an agency worker was employed. One team manager has gone on secondment to the placements team and two new personal advisers have now been appointed.
4. Since the previous report the number of young people open to the service has remained stable at 344. The Improvement Plan produced in Autumn 2015 predicted that numbers would begin to fall but this has not proved to be the case. A new demand modelling report has been developed to support predicting demand.
5. The team continues to work hard to support young people into education, training and employment. Of the young people aged 18 years and above who are engaged with the service, 62% are involved in some form of education, training or employment activity. This can range from voluntary work to undertaking a degree. Two young people are currently applying for Masters degree courses in teaching and international development. Of those who are not engaged, some are unable to work or attend college due to illness or parenthood, but 24% are not engaged due to other reasons. These reasons largely relate to entrenched difficulties such as social, emotional and behavioural problems which have led to poor academic outcomes. Leaving care support for these young people is often focused on maintaining accommodation and providing practical support

with daily living and independence skills. For these young people, being able to engage in any form of education, training or employment is a long term goal.

6. Between October and December 2015 the service provided a 100 day work experience opportunity for one of Nottinghamshire's care leavers in partnership with NCC Skills for Employment. This was a valuable opportunity for the young woman involved and she was able to learn day to day office procedures, develop skills such as timekeeping, communication skills and gain an understanding of issues such as confidentiality, professional boundaries and behaviour in the workplace. She worked alongside personal advisers and contributed to work on exit interviews. The team is now in the process of organising another work experience placement.
7. The availability and affordability of suitable accommodation continues to be a challenge for young people leaving care. The Family Service oversees the allocation of supported accommodation placements within the current funded portfolio. The Supported Accommodation Panel meets weekly to ensure that young people aged 16 to 21 years in priority need are able to access the placements available. The Leaving Care team has a representative manager at each meeting to promote the needs of care leavers. This new model is proving to be very successful in maintaining some of the most challenging young people in supported accommodation. As well as allocation of accommodation on a needs led point system, the meetings are an opportunity for problem solving of the most complex young people with accommodation providers, commissioners and stakeholders working together to prevent homelessness and to move young people on in a positive way following a period of support to develop life skills.
8. The Staying Put policy, which allows young people to remain with foster carers from the age of 18 up to 21 years, continues to be very successful. Placement numbers have increased from 19 to 32 over the last year. A snapshot figure for April 2016 showed 33 young people in some form of Staying Put arrangement with a further three planned. Nottinghamshire's grant allocation has risen for the year 2016/17 from £134,115 to £201,173. The total spend for 2015/16 was £255,624 which exceeds the grant allocation but is largely contained within the overall Leaving Care Service budget.
9. Pathway Plans are completed by social workers in the Looked After Children Team for young people in care from the age of 16 years and continue to be reviewed by Personal Advisers from the Leaving Care Team post 18. The plans are reviewed at least every six months and the quality and timeliness of pathway planning is improving. An internal team audit completed at the end of March 2016 identified that 86% of plans were completed within timescales. The Quality Management Framework audit report (October – December 2015) for Children's Social Care fieldwork teams reported that four out of the seven cases graded as good or outstanding were in the Leaving Care team. A themed Pathway Plan audit was undertaken by the Quality and Improvement team and Independent Reviewing Officers between October and December 2015 with 83% of those cases audited in Leaving Care graded at good or outstanding.
10. There continues to be a challenge in the provision of accessible emotional wellbeing and mental health services for care leavers between the ages of 18 and 21 years. If there is a formal mental health diagnosis then access to adult services is well planned and timely, however, a proportion of Nottinghamshire's care leavers have poor mental health (sometimes resulting in self harm) but no diagnosis. Progress has been made and the

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) LAC team now offer consultation to the Leaving Care Service. Negotiations are currently taking place with Adult Services and Health commissioners to identify Nottinghamshire care leavers as a priority group for assessment and the Future in Mind contract for 2016/17 has also identified work with care leavers as a priority.

### **Other Options Considered**

11. This report is for noting only.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

12. This report is for noting only.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the update on the Leaving Care Service be noted.

**Steve Edwards**  
**Service Director, Children's Social Care**

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### **Constitutional Comments**

14. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

### **Financial Comments (SS 19/05/16)**

15. The financial implications of the report are contained within paragraph 8 above.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Leaving Care Service update – report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee on 14 September 2015

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

C0824

**13 June 2016****Agenda Item: 11****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE****LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY UPDATE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the Sub-Committee on the progress of the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18 and to share the updated priorities for 2016-17.

**Information and Advice**

2. The Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18 sets out the Council's ambition as corporate parents to *ensure our looked after children and care leavers have all the opportunities that good parents afford their children*.
3. This strategy builds on the commitment to multi-agency working which is evidenced by the successes of the 2012-2015 Looked After Children Strategy. The Strategy was refreshed in 2015 and now includes care leavers, as it is recognised that the Council's corporate parenting responsibility does not end when a young person leaves care.
4. This strategy was developed by the multi-agency Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy Group, which includes members from children's social care, education and health. Looked after children and young people in Nottinghamshire were also consulted on a number of occasions as part of the development of the strategy.
5. The 2015-18 strategy aims to drive improvement in six outcomes for looked after children and care leavers in Nottinghamshire:
  - looked after children and care leavers are happy and healthy
  - looked after children and care leavers are safe
  - looked after children and care leavers achieve their potential
  - looked after children and care leavers are prepared for adulthood
  - looked after children and care leavers are listened to
  - looked after children and care leavers build positive relationships
6. Progress is expected across all outcomes over the course of the three years. In order to ensure that the associated planned activity is realistic, deliverable and focused, the Strategy Group developed an Annual Action Plan, which is reviewed each year by looked after children, care leavers and professionals. The progress of the Annual Action Plan for 2015-16 can be found in **Appendix A**.
7. Each year, the Annual Action Plan focusses on a number of key outcome statements; this provides a vehicle for the multi-agency LAC and Care Leavers Strategy Group to drive improvement in the selected focus areas. The Annual Action Plan has been reviewed for 2016-17 and will focus on the following outcomes:

## Children and young people:

- have good emotional wellbeing
- have support with their mental health needs when they need it
- have their health needs assessed when they enter care
- have a safe place to live
- are safe from sexual exploitation
- do not go missing from care
- are safe from bullying
- make good progress each year in school
- leave school with good GCSE results
- remain in education or training, or move into employment after leaving school
- have the best start in life
- are supported to develop meaningful plans to help them prepare for the future
- have the practical skills needed to live alone
- can access support to prepare for parenting at the right time
- are involved in making plans and giving feedback about their care
- are involved in making plans about their future
- have a chance to talk to their social workers alone
- are supported to maintain meaningful contact with their birth families (where appropriate)
- have an understanding of safe and positive relationships
- have as few changes of social worker as possible.

## Key Successes

### 8. Key successes of the Strategy to date include:

- care leavers are given their health histories (or 'health passport') when they leave care
- a new countywide health consent form has been agreed by all stakeholders and implemented
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) referrals are risk assessed and any urgent self-harm referrals are seen as per the self-harm protocol; the service offers a follow-up community appointment within seven days
- monthly CAMHS consultations continue with colleagues and young people in the three Local Authority mainstream residential homes
- Barnardo's Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) workers have increased from one to three and Barnardo's have extended their specialist service to include care leavers
- the completion of missing return interviews is sound, and the timeliness of completing return interviews is improving
- hotspot meetings are proving effective in addressing the most prolific missing children
- a dedicated full-time Social Work Practice Consultant has commenced work focussing on the improvement of the quality of pathway planning across LAC and Leaving Care, with a specific emphasis on cases transitioning to the leaving care team
- in 83% of LAC cases audited, the involvement of children and young people in making plans about their future was graded as good or outstanding
- the quality and timeliness of pathway planning is improving. An internal team audit completed at the end of March 2016 identified that 86% of plans were completed within timescales. A themed Pathway Plan audit was undertaken by the Quality and Improvement team and Independent Reviewing Officers between October and



December 2015 with 83% of those cases audited in Leaving Care graded at good or outstanding.

- placement support to young people fostered by Local Authority foster carers has been strengthened by confirming the permanent roles of fostering family workers; these workers are involved in identity work and direct work with young people, as well as supporting foster carers in maintaining placements at times of challenge
- the use of 'Getting Ready for Adult Life' workbooks has been embedded with young people in preparation for leaving care
- a work experience scheme has been developed for Nottinghamshire's care leavers in partnership with NCC Skills for Employment
- there is increased life story work evidenced on files and this is supported by an increase in scrutiny by Independent Reviewing Officers.

## **Areas for Continued Improvement**

9. There continues to be a challenge in the provision of accessible emotional wellbeing and mental health services for care leavers between the ages of 18 and 21 years. If there is a formal mental health diagnosis then access to adult services is well planned and timely; however, a proportion of Nottinghamshire's care leavers have poor mental health (sometimes resulting in self harm) but no diagnosis. Progress has been made and the CAMHS LAC team now offers consultation to the Leaving Care Service. Negotiations are currently taking place with Adult Services and Health commissioners to identify Nottinghamshire care leavers as a priority group for assessment and services have also identified work with care leavers as a priority.
10. Additional areas that require continued focus and improvement include:
  - additional focus on social workers undertaking Missing Return Interviews to specifically ask about unprotected sexual activity, in order to address sexual health needs of young people at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation
  - increasing the care leaver representation at the Children in Care Council
  - improving the number, quality and timeliness of Personal Education Plans
  - ensuring that 16-18 years olds who are not on roll at sixth forms in school have access to education, employment or training.

## **Other Options Considered**

11. This report is for noting only.

## **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

12. This report is for noting only.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Implications**

14. The Strategy and Annual Action Plan seek to strengthen support and practice which will ensure looked after children and care leavers continue to be safeguarded.

## **Implications for Service Users**

15. Looked after children and care leavers will benefit from improved services and multi-agency working aimed at improving outcomes.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That:

- 1) the update on the progress of the action plan for the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18 be noted
- 2) the priorities of the Annual Action Plan for 2016-17 be noted.

**Steve Edwards**  
**Service Director, Children's Social Care**

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## **Constitutional Comments**

16. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required

## **Financial Comments (SS 17/05/16)**

17. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18 – report to Policy Committee on 17 June 2015

Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18 – report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee in 11 January 2016

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

C0828



## APPENDIX A: LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY 2015-18

### PROGRESS OF ANNUAL ACTION PLAN – Q4 2015/16

For Nottinghamshire, the performance data available for 1 October – 31 December is reported. The most recent data for national average and children's services statistical neighbours is reported, where available. Please note, comparisons may be indicative only, as the reporting periods are not necessarily aligned. Where Nottinghamshire performance meets or exceeds the latest national performance information, this is highlighted by the emboldened boxes.

Key: (p) = provisional data; (+) = better than previous value; (-) = worse than previous value; (=) = same as previous value; (n/a) = not comparable to previous value

Outcome 1: Looked After Children and Care Leavers are Happy & Healthy									
Outcome Statement	Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						National Average	Statistical Neighbours
		2014/15 Annual Performance	Current Reporting Period	Current Value		Previous Reporting Period	Previous Value		
<b>1.1 Looked After Children and Care Leavers have good emotional wellbeing</b>	Average SDQ score per LAC child	14.9	2014/15 annual	<b>15.4</b>	+	2013/14 annual	14.9	13.9 (2014/15)	14.0 (2014/15)
	Percentage of children for whom an SDQ score was submitted	52%	2014/15 annual	60%	+	2013/14 annual	52%	72% (2014/15)	57% (2014/15)
<b>1.2 Looked After Children and Care Leavers have support with their mental health needs when they need it</b>	Total number of referrals received by the CAMHS CLA team	x	1 May 2015 – 30 Sep 2015	152	+	1 Jan 2015 – 30 April 2015	148	x	x
	Average waiting time for initial CAMHS consultation with a social worker	x	1 May 2015 – 30 Sep 2015	44 days	-	1 Jan 2015 – 30 April 2015	36 days	x	x
<b>1.3 Looked After Children and Care Leavers do not misuse drugs and alcohol</b>	Percentage of children who have been looked after for at least 12 months, where there are concerns about alcohol misuse by the child	4%	2015/16 Q4	3.2%	-	2015/16 Q3	3.0%	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of children who have been looked after for at least 12 months, where there are concerns about the child's mental health	11.8%	2015/16 Q4	8.9%	-	2015/16 Q3	8.1%	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of children who have been looked after for at least 12 months, where there are concerns about drug misuse by the child	6.4%	2015/16 Q4	6.6%	-	2015/16 Q3	5.5%	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of children who have been looked after for at least 12 months and have received intervention for any substance misuse problems,	4.2%	2015/16 Q4	3.2%	+	2015/16 Q3	2.5%	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of children who have been looked after for at least 12 months and have been offered substance misuse intervention but refused it	2.3%	2015/16 Q4	2.6%	-	2015/16 Q3	2.1%	N/A	N/A
<b>1.4 Looked After Children and Care Leavers have good sexual health and access to contraception</b>	Number of Youth Centres that have a trained TTO member of staff to register CYP aged 13-25 onto C-Card Scheme	x	April-16	40	+	Aug-15	37	x	x
	Percentage of children who have been looked after for at least 12 months and experienced teenage pregnancy	2.3%	2015/16 Q4	1.6%	=	2015/16 Q3	1.6%	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of children who have been looked after for at least 12 months where there are concerns relating to the child's sexual activity	5.6%	2015/16 Q4	3.6%	-	2015/16 Q3	2.9%	N/A	N/A
<b>1.5 Looked After Children and Care Leavers have their health needs assessed when they enter care</b>	Percentage of initial health assessments completed within timescales	89.6%	2014/15	80.7%	-	2013/14	89.6%	89.7% (2014/15)	86.1% (2014/15)

Outcome 2: Looked After Children and Care Leavers are Safe									
Outcome Statement	Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						National Average	Statistical Neighbours
		2014/15 Annual Performance	Current Reporting Period	Current Value		Previous Reporting Period	Previous Value		
<b>2.1 Looked After Children and Care Leavers have a safe place to live</b>	Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation	83.0%	2015/16 Q4	79.5%	+	2015/16 Q3	75.2%	80.7% (2014/15)	75.3% (2014/15)
<b>2.2 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are safe from sexual exploitation</b>	Percentage of LAC with CSE Concerns*	13% (67/522 LAC aged 10+)	As at end of 2015/16 Q4	9.7% (52/537 LAC aged 10+)	-	As at end of 2015/16 Q3	9.1% (48/528 LAC aged 10+)	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of LAC with CSE Concerns* who have had a Strategy Meeting	28% (19/67 LAC)	As at end of 2015/16 Q4	42% (22/52 LAC)	+	As at end of 2015/16 Q3	38% (18/48 LAC)	N/A	N/A
<b>2.3 Looked After Children do not go missing from care</b>	Percentage of Nottinghamshire LAC missing from placement by individual child	11% (135/1215 All LAC)	2015/16 Q4	9.2% (77/839 All LAC)	-	2015/16 Q3	8.5% (74/867 All LAC)	6% (6,110/99,230 All LAC)	7.6% (1,020/13,395 All LAC)
		N/A	2015/16 Q4	14% (77/537 LAC aged 10+)	=	2015/16 Q3	14% (74/528 LAC aged 10+)	N/A	N/A
	Average number of missing episodes for each LAC child who went missing	3.7 episodes	2015/16 Q4	<b>3.1 episodes (77 LAC/251 episodes)</b>	-	2015/16 Q3	3.2 episodes (74 LAC/235 episodes)	4.7 (2014/15)	3.5 (2014/15)
<b>2.4 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are safe from bullying</b>	Consideration of measurable data ongoing								

\* Children identified with a risk of CSE could have been identified at a point in time that pre-dates their LAC status

Outcome 3: Looked After Children and Care Leavers Achieve their Potential									
Outcome Statement	Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						National Average	Statistical Neighbours
		2014/15 Annual Performance	Current Reporting Period	Current Value		Previous Reporting Period	Previous Value		
3.1 Looked After Children and Care Leavers leave school with good GCSE results	Percentage of LAC achieving 5 A*-C (including English and Mathematics) at Key Stage 4	14.8%	2014/15 annual	14.8%	+	2013/14 annual	13.1%	13.8% (2014/15)	13.9% (2014/15)
3.2 Looked After Children and Care Leavers make good progress in school each year	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 2 at Key Stage 1 in Reading	64%	2014/15 annual	64%	-	2013/14 annual	76.0%	71% (2014/15)	64% (2014/15)
	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 2 at Key Stage 1 in Writing	55%	2014/15 annual	55%	-	2013/14 annual	67.0%	63% (2014/15)	59% (2014/15)
	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 2 at Key Stage 1 in Mathematics	68%	2014/15 annual	68%	-	2013/14 annual	76.0%	73% (2014/15)	66% (2014/15)
	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 4 at Key Stage 2 in Reading	66%	2014/15 annual	66%	-	2013/14 annual	72.0%	71% (2014/15)	72.5% (2014/15)
	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 4 at Key Stage 2 in Writing	58%	2014/15 annual	58%	+	2013/14 annual	55.0%	61% (2014/15)	58.3% (2014/15)
	Percentage of LAC achieving Level 4 at Key Stage 2 in Mathematics	58%	2014/15 annual	58%	-	2013/14 annual	69.0%	13.8% (2014/15)	62.2% (2014/15)
3.3 Looked After Children and Care Leavers remain in education or training, or move into employment after leaving school	Percentage of Care Leavers in education, employment or training aged 19-21	50.9%	2015/16 Q4	47.3%	-	2015/16 Q3	47.7%	47.8% (2014/15)	42.5% (2014/15)
3.4 Looked After Children and Care Leavers have the opportunity to access a university education	Percentage of Care Leavers in Higher Education	4.0%	2015/16 Q4	4.5%	+	2015/16 Q3	3.3%	6.5% (2014/15)	6.9% (2014/15)
3.5 Looked After Children and Care Leavers have the opportunity to join in out of school activities	Consideration of measurable data ongoing								
3.6 Looked After Children and Care Leavers have the best start in life	Percentage of LAC reaching a "Good Level of Development"(EYFSP attainment figures)	41.2%	2014/15 annual	41.2%	+	2013/14 annual	31.8%	x	x

Outcome 4: Looked After Children and Care Leavers are Prepared for Adulthood									
Outcome Statement	Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						National Average	Statistical Neighbours
		2014/15 Annual Performance	Current Reporting Period	Current Value		Previous Reporting Period	Previous Value		
4.1 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are supported to develop meaningful plans to help them prepare for the future	Consideration of measurable data ongoing								
4.2 Care Leavers have somewhere safe to live after they leave care	Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation*	83.0%	2015/16 Q4	79.5%	+	2015/16 Q3	75.2%	80.7% (2014/15)	75.3% (2014/15)
	Percentage of care leavers identified as being potentially being at risk due to homeless / housing issues	3.2%	2015/16 Q4	2.2%	-	2015/16 Q3	2.0%	N/A	N/A
4.3 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are supported to transition to adult services (where appropriate)	Consideration of measurable data ongoing								
4.4 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are supported to develop meaningful plans to help them prepare for the future	Consideration of measurable data ongoing								



Outcome 5: Looked After Children and Care Leavers are Listened To									
Outcome Statement	Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						National Average	Statistical Neighbours
		2014/15 Annual Performance	Current Reporting Period	Current Value		Previous Reporting Period	Previous Value		
<b>5.1 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are involved in making plans and giving feedback about their care</b>	Percentage of LAC who felt involved in their LAC Review and able to contribute if they wanted to*	x	Feb-16	97%	-	Nov-14	100%	x	x
	Percentage of children who have been looked after for at least 12 months with a completed "Listen to me" document	29%	2015/16 Q4	31.0%	+	2015/16 Q3	30.5%	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of children who have been looked after for at least 12 months, whose social worker discussed their LAC report and Care Plan with the child / young person before their LAC Review	N/A	2015/16 Q4	54.9%	+	2015/16 Q3	54.6%	N/A	N/A
<b>5.2 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are involved in making plans about their future</b>	Percentage of LAC who understood what was decided at their LAC Review*	x	Feb-16	100%	=	Nov-14	100.0%	x	x
	Percentage of children who have been looked after for at least 12 months who were consulted by IRO prior to their LAC review meeting	39.7%	2015/16 Q4	37.1%	-	2015/16 Q3	38.5%	N/A	N/A
<b>5.3 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are involved in making plans about their education</b>	Percentage of school-age LAC with an up-to-date Personal Education Plan	60.2%	2015/16 Q4	62.6%	+	2015/16 Q3	52.7%	N/A	N/A
<b>5.4 Looked After Children and Care Leavers feel listened to</b>	Percentage of children who got the opportunity to speak with the chair before the meeting started and felt listened to*	x	Feb-16	90%	-	Nov-14	92.0%	x	x
	Percentage of LAC who felt involved in their LAC Review and able to contribute if they wanted to*	x	Feb-16	97%	-	Nov-14	100%	x	x
	Percentage of LAC who felt listened to in their Return Interview*	x	Dec-14	62.0%		x	x	x	x

\* From Young Person's Review Questionnaire - sample of children and young people

Outcome 6: Looked After Children and Care Leavers Build Positive Relationships									
Outcome Statement	Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						National Average	Statistical Neighbours
		2014/15 Annual Performance	Current Reporting Period	Current Value		Previous Reporting Period	Previous Value		
6.1 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are supported to maintain meaningful contact with their birth families (where appropriate)	Consideration of measurable data ongoing								
6.2 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are supported to maintain positive relationships with the people they live with	Looked After Children with 3 or more placements in any one year	9.8%	2015/16 Q4	10.4%	-	2015/16 Q3	9.0%	11.0% (2013/14)	10.0% (2013/14)
6.3 Looked After Children and Care Leavers are supported to manage the ending of relationships positively	Consideration of measurable data ongoing								

**13 June 2016****Agenda Item: 12**

## **REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES WORK PROGRAMME**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider the Committee's work programme for 2016/17.

### **Information and Advice**

2. The County Council requires each committee to maintain a work programme. The work programme will assist the management of the committee's agenda, the scheduling of the committee's business and forward planning. The work programme will be updated and reviewed at each pre-agenda meeting and committee meeting. Any member of the committee is able to suggest items for possible inclusion.
3. The attached work programme has been drafted in consultation with the Chairman and includes items which can be anticipated at the present time. Other items will be added to the programme as they are identified.
4. As part of the transparency introduced by the new committee arrangements, committees are expected to review day to day operational decisions made by officers using their delegated powers. It is anticipated that the committee will wish to commission periodic reports on such decisions. The committee is therefore requested to identify activities on which it would like to receive reports for inclusion in the work programme.

### **Other Options Considered**

5. None.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

6. To assist the committee in preparing its work programme.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the committee's work programme be noted, and consideration be given to any changes which the committee wishes to make.

**Jayne Francis-Ward**  
**Corporate Director, Resources**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: Assistant Democratic Services Officer -**  
Julie Brailsford  
Tel: 0115 977 4694

### **Constitutional Comments (SLB)**

8. The Committee has authority to consider the matters set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

### **Financial Comments (PS)**

9. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **Background Papers**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All

## CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2016-17

<u>Report Title</u>	<u>Brief summary of agenda item</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Report Author</u>
<b>12 September 2016</b>			
Performance reporting (Quarter 1 2016/17) – services for Looked After Children and Care Leavers	For information	Steve Edwards	Shelagh Mitchell
Adoption Service update: March to August 2016	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Tracey Coull
New accommodation provision for 16-21 year olds	Six-monthly update reports	Steve Edwards	Shelagh Mitchell/ Beth Cundy
Improving health outcomes for children and young people in the care of the Local Authority	Annual report	Steve Edwards	Kathryn Higgins/ Shelagh Mitchell
County CAMHS Looked After and Adoption Team – service provision and developments 2015/16	Annual information report	Steve Edwards	Vonny Senogles
Children who run away or go missing from care		Steve Edwards	Terri Johnson
Clayfields re-build		Steve Edwards	Thirza Smith
<b>12 December 2016</b>			
Performance reporting (Quarter 2 2016/17) – services for Looked After Children and Care Leavers	For information	Steve Edwards	Shelagh Mitchell
Autumn Term report for the Virtual School for Looked After Children	For information	Steve Edwards	Sue Denholm
Leaving Care Service update	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Michelle Lee
Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18 – six-monthly progress reports	For information	Steve Edwards	Dawn Godfrey
Independent Reviewing Officer Service – update	Six monthly update	Steve Edwards	Izzy Martin
<b>13 March 2017</b>			
Performance reporting (Quarter 3 2016/17) – services for Looked After Children and Care Leavers	For information	Steve Edwards	Shelagh Mitchell

<b><u>Report Title</u></b>	<b><u>Brief summary of agenda item</u></b>	<b><u>Lead Officer</u></b>	<b><u>Report Author</u></b>
Spring Term report for the Virtual School for Looked After Children	For information	Steve Edwards	Sue Denholm/ Linda Foster
New accommodation provision for 16-21 year olds	Six-monthly update reports	Steve Edwards	Shelagh Mitchell/ Beth Cundy
Provision, achievements and progress of the Children in Care Council and participation of children and young people looked after 2016/17	For information	Steve Edwards	Shelagh Mitchell
Adoption Service update: September 2016 to February 2017	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Tracey Coull
Contact Service update	Annual report for information	Steve Edwards	Denise Martin
Advocacy Service for Looked After Children	Annual report for information	Steve Edwards	Ty Yousaf
<b>12 June 2017</b>			
Performance reporting (Quarter 4 2016/17) – services for Looked After Children and Care Leavers	For information	Steve Edwards	Shelagh Mitchell
Summer Term report for the Virtual School for Looked After Children	For information	Steve Edwards	Sue Denholm/ Linda Foster
Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18 – six-monthly progress reports	For information	Steve Edwards	Dawn Godfrey
End of year report for the Independent Reviewing Officer Service	For information	Steve Edwards	Izzy Martin
Improving health outcomes for children and young people in the care of the Local Authority	Annual report	Steve Edwards	Kathryn Higgins/ Shelagh Mitchell
Fostering Service annual report	Annual report for information	Steve Edwards	
Leaving Care Service update	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Michelle Lee
County CAMHS Looked After and Adoption Team – service provision and developments 2016/17	Annual information report	Steve Edwards	Vonny Senogles